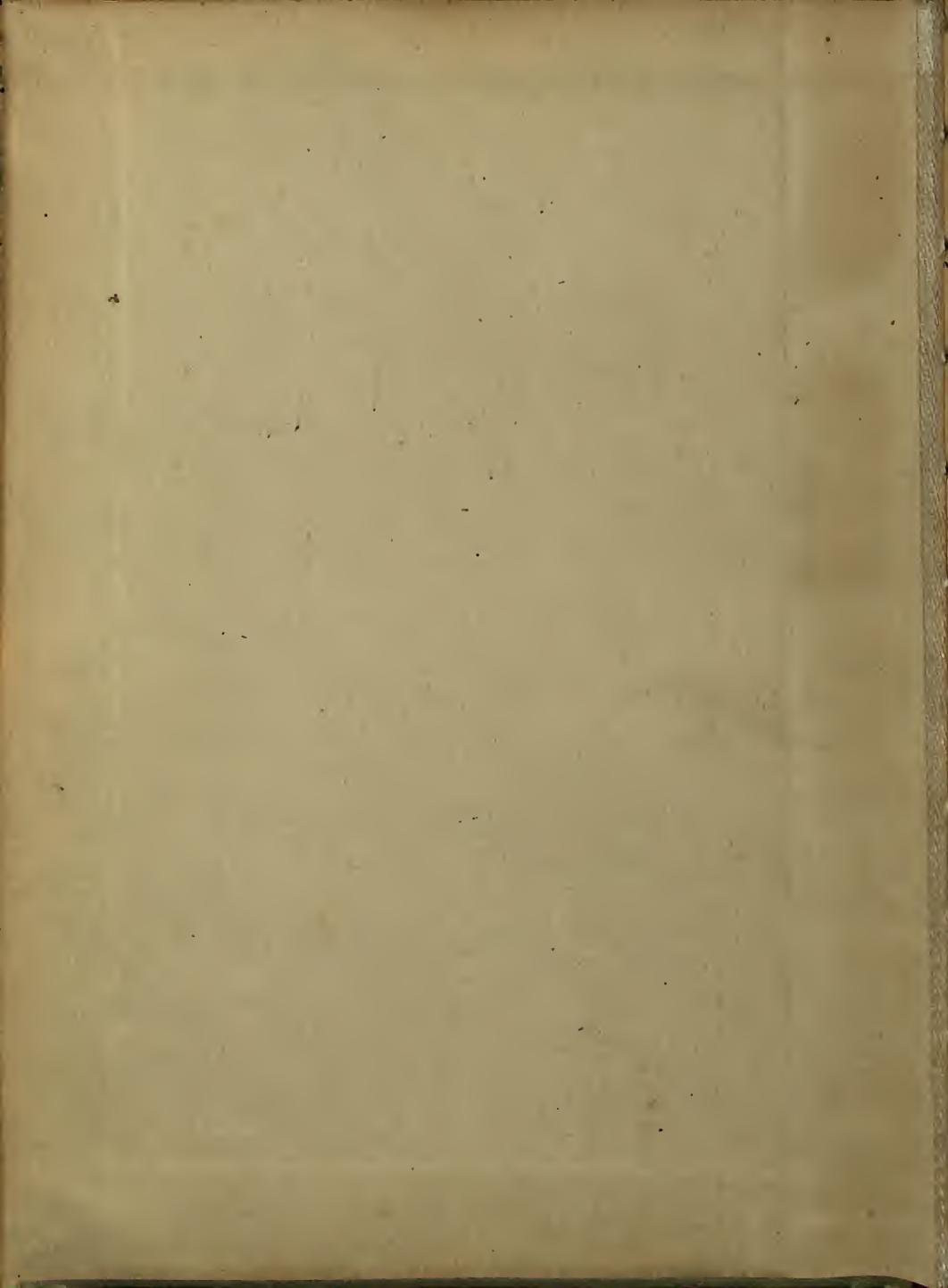




STORIES FOR
KINDERGARTEN
AND
PRIMARY SCHOOLS

—
WILTSE



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STORIES

FOR

KINDERGARTENS AND PRIMARY SCHOOLS.

BY

SARA E. WILTSE.



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PREFACE.

THESE stories have been told to children, and none has been put in this volume until judged and approved by the small critics.

Three illustrations — “The Game of Blindman’s Buff in the Star Garden”; “I Fink the Stars are Playing Peep-boo with me, Mamma”; and the “Cat and Mouse” — were drawn by the children who have oftenest heard the stories. It invariably heightened their interest, to be allowed to illustrate such points as seemed to them of most importance.

My thanks are due the editors of “The Independent,” of New York, and “The Christian Register,” of Boston, for kind permission to make use of such of these productions as have appeared in their pages from time to time.

THE AUTHOR.

INDEX.

SPRING-TIME PRAYER	1
A LEGEND OF THE COWSLIP	2
FISH OR FROGS	3
WHAT ARE THE DANDELIONS ?	10
SUMMER PRAYER	12
JACK AND GILL	13
THE WALNUT TREE THAT WANTED TO BEAR TULIPS	23
CARL AND THE EARTH WORMS	27
THE MAN WHO WANTED TO CHAIN THE SEA	31
AUTUMN PRAYER	35
STORY OF A MOUSE	36
PEEP STAR! STAR PEEP!	42
GRANDMA KAOLINE	46
GRANDMA KAOLINE'S STORY	49
WINTER PRAYER	55
TWO PICTURES	56
A LEGEND OF THE GREAT DIPPER	57
THE LITTLE BOY IN OUR HOUSE	63
IDDLY BUNG'S APRIL CHRISTMAS TREE	64
A STORY FOR WILLIE WINKLE	72

SPRING-TIME PRAYER.

I.

Hear us thank Thee, kindest Friend,
For the spring-time Thou dost send;
For the warm sunshine and rain;
For the birds that sing again;
For the sky so clear and blue;
For our kindergarten too.

II.

Help me in my heart to thank Thee;
Help me with my lips to praise Thee;
May I to each playmate be
Kind, as Thou hast been to me.

A LEGEND OF THE COWSLIP.

There was a time, long ago, when the Cowslip had no golden blossoms. To be sure, she wished to have them, but as she did not know how to bloom, she contented herself, for one summer, with her rich, dark leaves, and in autumn fell asleep with her feet curled close and warm under ground, and her head tucked beneath the cover which her mother provided.

But one night she woke with a little shiver, and said :

“Mother, I’m cold ;” and her mother hastened to cover her with a gaily colored blanket of leaves, after which she slept many days and nights, until a frosty, starry hour came, when she stirred a little, and whispered :

“Mother, I’m cold.”

Then her mother covered her with a white blanket soft as down upon the mother bird’s breast, and our Cowslip slept softly but soundly many weeks.

One May morning she heard a delightful rustling all around her, whereupon she nestled in her bed, not knowing that the rustle was caused by the whispering of her companions

under ground, who, like her, were just awaking from happy dreams, pushing out their white feet, and stretching up their tiny hands, as you have seen waking babies do.

Then she heard a robin sing, but as the earth still covered her, the song was but half understood, and to hear better, she lifted her head high enough for a yellow sunbeam, who had been looking everywhere for her, to see her.

She remembered both the sunbeam and the robin, and so glad was she to see them both, that she laughed a low, sweet "Ha, ha, ha, ha!" and there she stood in full bloom, every ha, ha! having become a smiling, sunny-hearted blossom.

Of course she was amazed, and hung her head in a sweetly modest fashion, as do cowslips to this day; for since that happy spring-time, not one of the family has forgotten to laugh itself into golden bloom, when it hears the robin and sees the yellow sunbeam of merry May.



FISH OR FROGS.

There was once a family of Frogs living in a pond in the warm country, which was so ill-

natured in all its talk, that the voice of each member of the family had grown harsh and disagreeable; these Frogs could not even sing sweetly, they had so spoiled their voices with fretting and scolding.

At last the people, living near this pond, named the family "Blacksmith Frogs," their voices clanged and clashed so like the anvils and hammers of blacksmiths.

In another pond, not far away, lived another family of Frogs which never scolded; the mother always spoke gently to her children, and the children spoke softly to one another; when they sang, not one of them strained its voice, or wrinkled its face with screaming; and the people so enjoyed their soft, musical piping, that they called them "Sugar Miller Frogs," because their voices were not unlike the sound made by the mills in grinding the sweet, juicy corn and beets to get the sugar from them.

One day Mrs. Blacksmith Frog went to see Mrs. Sugar Miller Frog, and soon as she was inside the door, she began in a loud, harsh voice: "I'm sure I don't believe we shall have any weather fit for hatching eggs this year! I never saw the little boys behave so badly in my

life! When the sun comes out, it scorches, and when the clouds come along, the water grows too cold for grown Frogs, to say nothing of babies!"

Mrs. Sugar Miller Frog had had no chance to speak yet, but Mrs. Blacksmith Frog stopped for breath, while she twitched angrily at her bonnet strings, and Mrs. Sugar Miller Frog hurriedly, but most gently, began:

"I really thought the weather quite pleasant. I am sure my eggs are doing nicely,—just see them! here they are under this broad lily-leaf,—and some kind-hearted boys threw me this shingle, on which I can float about when the sun shines, or under which I can sit when it rains; when the sun is too warm, Mr. Frog pushes it under those willow branches for me."

Mrs. Blacksmith Frog had been angry with the boys who threw a shingle in her pond, and she went home to scold Mr. Blacksmith Frog because he did not push her about the pond on a shingle, and Mr. Blacksmith Frog scolded her because she did not get home in time to get his dinner; and with all the scolding, they nearly forgot to attend to the eggs.

Both Frog mothers staid at home some time

after this, to attend their eggs; but one morning Mrs. Sugar Miller Frog ran over to Mrs. Blacksmith Frog to tell a wonderful story, of how her eggs had all hatched, and instead of bottle-green baby Frogs, she had a large family of young Fish!

"Fish! horrid Fish!" exclaimed Mrs. Blacksmith Frog. "I'd be ashamed to say it, and I don't believe you know Fish from Frogs!"

Mr. and Mrs. Blacksmith Frog hurried over to their neighbor's pond, and looked at the babies with much disapproval, for they surely looked less like Frogs than like Fish.

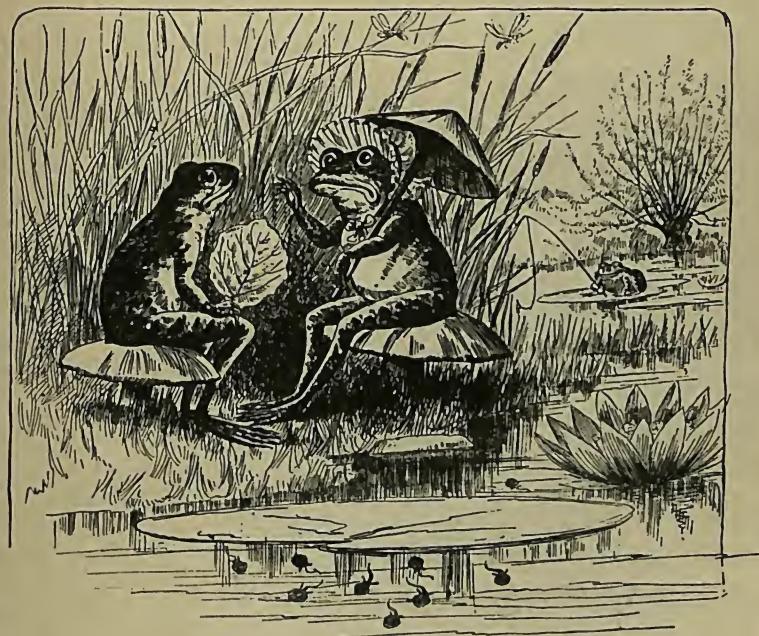
Mrs. Sugar Miller Frog was very cheerful, saying she was fond of her babies any way, and she felt sure it would be pleasant to have Fish in the family; they had many advantages over Frogs, and look at them as you might, they were the dearest, prettiest babies in the world!

Mr. and Mrs. Blacksmith Frog went scolding homeward, much disgusted with Frogs who were not contented in their own sphere, but wanted to look like Fish, and get into society in which they did not belong.

What was their surprise, on arriving at their own pond, to find that their eggs had hatched,

and their babies looked as much like Fish as did their neighbor's.

Mrs. Blacksmith Frog shook her babies, and scolded, until Mr. Blacksmith Frog buried himself in the mud for three days, where he kept up



such a grumbling and growling that the people thought they would have to move away.

One day Mrs. Blacksmith Frog was so frightened at something that happened to her babies that she forgot to open her mouth until she was

inside her neighbor's door, and then she talked and cried both at once:

"Mrs. Sugar Miller Frog! My babies are neither Fish—nor—Frogs! they are horrid Boys! I know they are, for they have—two legs!"

"I would not cry," answered Mrs. Sugar Miller Frog. "I find my children seem to be boys too, but I am not grieved. I like the little boys I have seen about here. We ought to be pleased if our children are to be men."

Mrs. Blacksmith Frog went home, and made her husband and children quite unhappy with her fault finding, until one day, she found two more legs pushing out from the body of her oldest child; then she called him a naughty child for not telling her in the first place that he was going to have four legs, instead of letting her think he was going to be a biped.

She now insisted that the children should all sit with her on the shingle in the sun, to hasten the sprouting of the new legs, but they could not obey her, for any child knows that sitting in the sunshine would quite kill a soft little tadpole.

One day the youngest baby seemed hoarse, and when Mrs. Blacksmith Frog opened its

little mouth to look in its throat, the mouth fell off in her hand! She tried to put it back, but the other children saw at once that the baby looked more like his papa without his little beak-like mouth, and they took their own mouths off, and stood there with funny, wide-open jaws, looking so much like their own scolding parents, that their mother could not send them to bed without their supper as she had threatened.

One morning these little tadpoles came in a row for their breakfast, eager to tell their mamma that they had left their tails behind them; they were as pleased as a small boy with his first trousers, but their mamma had formed such a habit of fault finding, that now they stood before her, perfect little Frogs, she had no pleasant words for them, but began a complaint about their carelessness in dropping the tails about in the bottom of the pond; and expressed many doleful fears lest the pond should be filled with a load of useless tails.

With this new trouble she went to Mrs. Sugar Miller Frog, who said :

“I am so happy! I was pleased with the prospect of my Fish children; I was not sorry

when I thought them boys; but now that they are becoming Frogs, so like ourselves, I am so happy I sing all night for joy."

But Mrs. Blacksmith Frog made such loud and bitter complaints, that the people who lived near her pond heartily wished she would move to North America—but she never did.

WHAT ARE THE DANDELIONS?

"Mamma, what are the dandelions?" asked little Susy, as she saw them for the first time in her life, which you must know had not been very long.

"They are flowers, Susy."

"I know that, mamma; but they are something more than—than—" but Susy could think of no flower which was only a flower to her; so she asked another question.

"Do their roots go down, down, very deep, mamma?"

"Deeper than the roots of most small flowers; but why do you ask that, Susy?"

"Oh, I thought they must go down to the gold, and draw it up into the sunshine; that

would make the gold happy, and that is the reason the dandelions laugh."

Susy walked on without speaking again, until she and her mamma reached one of the pleasant parlors on Beacon Street, which overlooks the Common, and then she clapped her hands, and cried :

"I see, I see it now ! Mamma, why didn't you tell me it was God's spatter work ?"

"I did not think of that," answered her mamma.

"What did you think ?"

"Nothing so beautiful as your thought, my child ; but I will tell you. I thought of the beautiful myth of Freya, in whom the Goths believed. They tell that she was forsaken by her husband, and, in her grief, wandered all over the earth shedding golden tears."

"And the dandelions grew up where her golden tears fell, didn't they, mamma ?"

"Perhaps they did ; for the Goths tell that before her there was winter, but as soon as she passed, flowers sprang up, until the whole earth blossomed."

SUMMER PRAYER.

I.

Kindest Friend, we thank Thee now
While our heads we lowly bow,
For the summer sun, and shower,
For each bright and smiling flower,
For grass so green, and cloud so white,
For rosy morn, and dewy night.

II.

Help me in my heart to thank Thee ;
Help me with my lips to praise Thee ;
May I to each playmate be
Kind, as Thou hast been to me.

JACK AND GILL.

Jack is four, and Gill is three years old. They live in the street day-times, and why they go home nights is a mystery, for they find little there to make them happy. Jack and Gill never quarrel with each other; they are never separated; they manage to steal out of the house, hand in hand, before the people are awake, and sometimes they wait outside the door at night, until they hear the heavy breathing of the brutal man and woman inside, and know by that sign that it is quite safe to enter.

Some mornings they find a little bread, or a few crackers for their breakfast, which they put in their pockets, and eat in the street, by the stone trough, placed there by some friend of animals.

If there is nothing on the table but the jug and the beer can, they go to a little bake-house, kept by a kind-hearted Scotch woman, who saves all her stale cakes for the "wee bairnies," and gives them fresh milk to moisten them, all the time rebuking herself that she does not give her freshest cakes, for she says

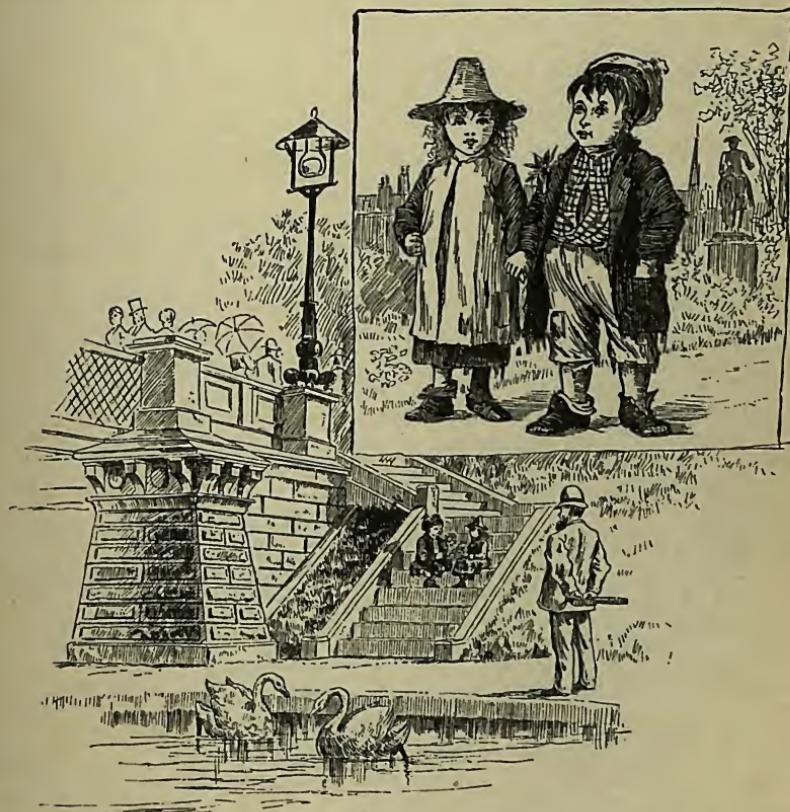
to her “gude mon,” “Eh, maister, if the Holy Bairnie cam this way, we’d gie Him a’; an’ I often think it is Himsel’ hid in them, a spierin’ aboot to see if we hev the love in oor herts that He had for us.”

Jack and Gill understand nothing of this talk, and offer in payment for their breakfast such bits of greenery or faded flowers as they find about the school house, which they pass on their way to the bakery; nor do they suspect that the janitor puts out the freshest of the fading flowers, and from a window watches their delight in finding them.

Jack always holds Gill by the hand.

Jack is short and stout, with a head as round as a ball, eyes round as marbles, and he waddles as if he would get along better without than with his stumpy little legs, for then he could roll; his round eyes are brown, his round cheeks are a dark, glowing red, and his face is lighted by a wonderful smile, even when great tears stand in his eyes; he wears little trousers with holes in the knees; shoes with holes in the toes; stockings with no toes at all, so there is always a little pink toe of his own peeping out. One stocking is generally

tied up, but his shoe-strings always draggle in the dirt and often trip him. He wears a calico waist with only two buttons on it, one at the



neck, and one at the side of the belt; the other fastenings are bent pins and bits of string. Over this waist he wears a woolen coat all summer, and on his head he wears a round

woolen cap, the crown of which is of gray and the sides of black cloth.

Gill is not round; she is almost as tall as Jack, but of very slender frame; she is not pretty, and yet everybody sees her when she passes; and most people turn to see, if they can, how they happened to notice her at all; and many speak to her without knowing why. Gill wears a faded calico dress; an apron with a long slit from the neck to the hem; a pair of shoes, or rather one slipper and one shoe, the stocking on the slippeted foot being tied up, but the one on the other foot hanging down over the top of the shoe. She wears a sugar-loaf hat with a soiled ribbon around it. She has not as much color in her cheeks as Jack has, and never trips and falls as Jack does. Her hair is yellow-brown; her eyes, blue when she is happy, gray when she is sad, and almost burning black when she is angry; and happy, sad, or angry, all the light of her face seems to have centered in her eyes.

She will thank a gentleman for a penny with something in those eyes which makes him watch to see that she does not throw the penny scornfully at him when he passes on;

and she will scratch a girl who laughs at Jack, with another look in her eyes which seems to say: "I would rather kiss than scratch, but how can I?"

Gill is afraid of no one, and has learned that her little songs often earn a dinner; so when a fine lady turns to look after the strange child, she will often clasp her hands behind her and sing, while Jack looks on in mute admiration, or pulls at her dress to stop her, according to the degree of his hunger. The lady generally waits to see what Gill will do next; and something both saucy and hungry in the blue-gray eyes tells the story, and the offered pennies are seized, and the children are gone before the lady has thought to ask any questions. Now that you know who they are and how they look, I will begin the story of Jack and Gill's Fourth of July.

Jack and Gill started out early to spend this day; they knew the man and woman would be cross all day; they always were on holidays.

On the morning of the Fourth, when Jack heard the first gun, he dressed himself, and pulled Gill's stockings on for her before waking her; then he patted her softly and steadily,

until the blue eyes opened, when, without a word, she crept out of bed, and into her dress, which Jack buttoned awry, peeped about the house for bread, which was not there, put her hand in Jack's, and with him crept down the dark staircase, and away to the bakehouse, where, in honor of the day, they thought, but really in love of the "Holy Bairnie," they found a sumptuous breakfast of fresh milk and warm rolls with butter, after which each had a large piece of Washington pie.

Then they went to the water trough to decide upon the best way to spend the day. Jack proposed going to sea, which he thought lay at the foot of Tremont Street, but Gill preferred the "Garding." They settled the question by deciding to go to both places, and waited for the "good policeman" to tell them which was the nearer. When he came, they both spoke at once, Jack saying:—

"Which is fardest, the sea or the garding?" and Gill asking:—

"Which is nearest, the garding or the sea?"

The policeman told them that both were too far away for such little folks, but he would give them some torpedoes to play with where they were.

As they had no pockets, Jack proposed they should "pop" them at once, and then go until they found either the "garding" or the sea, for he had no intention of heeding the policeman's advice to stay near the stone trough all day.

The crowd that jostled the children was no unusual sight to them, but the shop windows were always wonderful. They looked at toys, and selected such as they would buy when they were grown up and had money to spend, and all the time they plodded on toward the city, for, to them, Boston was a far-away wonderland. They never understood that they lived in the city, because they lived in the Highlands; and when a warm-hearted Irish woman, with her baby in her arms, asked them where they were going, they answered, "To the city," fearing she would insist upon turning them homeward, if they told her of the sea or the garden. When they reached Berkeley Street, they found the crowd greater; and looking in all directions, they caught a glimpse of splendid horses, with riders plumed and spangled; and hearing a drum, they hurried toward Columbus Avenue, where a grand procession was marching toward the city.

“If we could only get up high,” sighed Gill, just as Jack bumped his head against the post of a scaffolding that surrounded a new building. Up Jack clambered, and in a moment had pulled Gill after him. Then they clapped their hands with delight until the crowd disappeared down the street, when they slid down the post and followed it. Jack found a nickel on the pavement, and leading Gill into a fashionable restaurant, deposited it on the counter, calling for “ice cream for Gill and me.” The pretty waitress was about to send them away, but the proprietor happening to see them, motioned her to wait upon them. So ice cream and cake were served the hungry pair, after which the proprietor showed them the street that led to the garden, which they soon reached.

They stood quite still at the entrance for some minutes, looking from geraniums to trees, and then at geraniums again. They did not run in, as did other children, but walked slowly, as if afraid it was a dream from which they would wake unless they were very quiet.

Jack knelt and patted the turf, and Gill kissed it. Then they went to a bed of geraniums and knelt again. A policeman stood near, but he

need not have watched them; they did not know they could break those stems, nor would they have dared try if the policeman had given them permission.

Gill found a faded cluster in the gravelled path, and after holding it to her heart a moment, she put it in Jack's button hole, calling it a "sweet pretty deaded flower," after which the policeman offered to take them to see something pretty. He took them to the white lady of the fountain, and bade them stay there till he came again, which they willingly did, balancing themselves upon the stone basin, and talking to the goldfish that just eluded their fingers. The policeman told the superintendent the story of the "sweet pretty, deaded flower" and returned with a large bouquet for each of the children. Jack stood on his head, and Gill sat down in the gravelled path and hugged her flowers, kissing their pretty eyes and talking to them in a low tone of the Good Man who made flowers and ice cream. But the day did not pass without trouble for our little ones. They were sitting on the stone steps by the bridge watching the swans and the boats so intently that they did not see the burning stump of a cigar

that was carelessly thrown upon Gill's thin skirt; the little dress flashed and flamed to her very eyes before either could speak. Without looking to the right or left, Jack tore off his coat, and wrapped it close about Gill, and holding firmly to the sleeves, he thrust her into the pond, before the women on the bridge could scream, or the men think what to do. Many strong arms were ready to take the dripping child from the water; and, taking up the dear flowers which they had both instinctively thrown far from the scorching flames, Jack clasped the little crimson hand in his own blistered one, and started homeward, — no cry having been uttered by either of them.

But a gentleman who had witnessed it all took the wee girl in his arms, and asked Jack if they would like to ride home in his carriage.

The burns were more painful than dangerous, and were well dressed by a physician before the children were taken home.

The next week a strange thing occurred : the postman inquired for Master Jack Nelligan, and deposited a small package in his hand, which contained a shining gold medal, stamped thus :



And Jack and Gill wear it alternately, wondering what it means.

THE WALNUT TREE THAT WANTED TO BEAR TULIPS.

Many years ago, when your grandmamma's grandmamma was a little girl, there stood a tall young Walnut tree in the back yard of a tulip dealer.

Now the Walnut thought he had never seen anything so beautiful as the little Tulips that were set out in the yard to be kissed by the Sun, who each day paid a visit of an hour to the Walnut.

The wonder is that the Sun did not stay longer to watch the pretty shadow pictures which the Walnut began to make on the grass as soon as the Sun said "good morning."

Another wonder is, that the great Walnut ever thought of looking down at the dear little Tulips, when he might have looked up at the greater Sun. But so he did, and you and I will never know the why of a great many things smaller even than that, until we go up higher, to be taught by the dear Friend who knows everything.

However, the Tulips were very lovely, I assure you, with their scarlet and golden cups.

One day a wonderful sister Tulip was brought out. What color was she, do you suppose?

“Crimson?”

“No.”

“Purple?”

“No.”

I am sure you will not be able to guess, so I will tell you.

She was black, and she was softer than velvet, and more glossy than satin.

When the Walnut saw this beautiful Tulip, every little leaf danced in the air for joy, and every little branch bent low. You've seen the trees bending to kiss the children and the flowers that way, I am sure.

The Walnut did something else, which I will

tell you, if you will promise not to tell the Hickory or the Chestnut. He dropped a little leaf at the Tulip's feet, which was written all over with a wonderful language that nobody but trees and flowers, birds and bees, and perhaps Mr. Tennyson or Mr. Kingsley could read.

The Tulip did not seem to care about the leaf or the letter written on it, and we cannot tell whether she sent an answer back to the Walnut or not; be that as it may, the Walnut was not quite so happy after he sent the letter, but he began growing better.

And do you not think it wiser in our best Friend to make us good instead of happy, sometimes?

The Walnut used to say after this happened, "I'll bear Tulips myself."

How would a walnut tree look with Tulips among its leaves?

You think that could never, never happen? We shall see.

Walnut struck his roots deeper, and spread his branches broader and broader, until he was quite wonderful to look upon. Sometimes the Wind used to hear him singing something like this:

which was set to the most beautiful, rustling little tune you ever heard :

“ We'll bear tulips yet ;
Leaves and I can ne'er forget ;
Roots, be not weary ;
Heart, be thou cheery ;
The blessing may tarry,
But we'll bear tulips yet, —
Leaves, roots, and heart, do not forget.”

A hundred years went by, but there were no Tulips among the leaves of the Walnut tree. A hundred years is a long time for trees to wait, is it not? We can afford to wait longer for some things than can the trees, for we never, never really and truly die. Now at the end of the hundred years this Walnut fell to singing another refrain which the years had been teaching him :

“ I bear no tulips yet ;
And though I ne'er forget,
As Thou wilt, Master, let it be ;
Tulips, or only leaves for me,
Still I will cheery be.
Do Thou Thy will with me ;
Leaves, roots, and heart I yield to Thee.”

This dear Walnut had been very brave and stout hearted. He had left nothing undone which any Walnut tree could do, and he had grown very fine in fibre and perfect in form, so that one day a wood carver said: "That perfect tree is just what I want for my work." The brave old Walnut was cut down and sawed and chipped; but he did not mind, for what do you suppose the wood carver was making?

Black Tulips, to be sure!

Then I advise you to look sharply at every bit of wood carving you can find, for those very Tulips are somewhere, feeling very happy that they can bloom all the year round, while some of the Tulips we know have to sleep half the year at least.

(Any hard-wood tree, more familiar to the children, may be substituted for the walnut, and if they are familiar with any particular leaf or flower in wood-carving, the story may be modified to suit the carving.)

CARL AND THE EARTH WORMS.

Carl's hands were dirty; Carl's face was dirty; Carl's finger nails

were black at the ends; Carl's clothes were soiled; Carl's hair was not brushed, and his head looked like an old chestnut bur.

Carl could not tell if he had ever had a bath, and I do not believe he had had more than three in the three years in which he had been able to walk alone. But when Carl went to the kindergarten, a gentle woman took off his soiled clothes, put him in a tub of clean water, and with brush, soap, and towels, made him look almost like a cherub.

When he was dressed in fresh, clean clothes, he felt as if he could

never be dirty again; and he was so happy that when he went out to play, he wanted to make everybody and everything happy too. In the garden he found an earth worm, and by digging he found as many as he had fingers; and he ran for a wash basin and some warm water, and before the gentle woman knew what he was doing, he had them all washed, and was vainly trying to hang them on the fence to dry; for said he:

“Poor dirty things! they want to be clean for once in their lives.”

But they did not want to hang

on the fence, and they did want to get back into the cool, dark earth. When he understood that that would make them happy, he put them back, and heard, with great surprise, that they had much work to do under ground, ploughing and boring the whole earth, making it soft and loose about the little seeds so they can grow; the earth needing as many of these little living ploughs as there are seeds.

Now when Carl digs up an earth worm, he puts him back in great haste, saying: "Go back to your work, little earth worm; you

are good to my flower seeds, and I will be good to you."

THE MAN WHO WANTED TO CHAIN THE SEA.

Before there was such a city as New York or Boston; before great London or lovely Paris was built; even before the Holy Child was born, there lived a very proud man whose name was Xerxes. He was captain over a great many soldiers, who did not fight for their rights as men sometimes must, but went about robbing people of their lands and money.

The uncle of Xerxes, who was older and wiser than he, once advised him not to make such cruel wars, but Xerxes answered him very saucily, and paid no attention to his advice.

In a march which he undertook, at the head of his soldiers, he found a strait across his road, and he told his soldiers they must build a bridge of boats across the strait, on which the horses and cattle could cross the water.

When they had nearly finished the bridge,

there arose a great storm at sea, and the water in the strait was lifted up in great waves, which were white in the face, but their paleness seemed more of sorrow than of anger. The weak little boats, of which the bridge was made, were tossed about, up and down, rocked and pushed, and strained and pulled, until the chains that held them together were torn apart, and the bridge was spoiled.

When Xerxes saw this, he turned very white in the face, but not like the waves of the sea, for his paleness was from wicked anger and not from great sorrow.

Why do I think the sea was sorry?

Did you ever stand by the ocean, and look away, away to where the sky seems bending over the water, and the water rising up to the sky, until their faces are both hidden in a misty veil? Then did you turn your back to the sorry sea, and look at the hills covered with trees, and grass, and merry little flowers that laugh when the rain patters, and smile when the sun sifts its gold down upon them, and the great earth laughs everywhere before you, while behind you the greater sea moans and is sorry?

I think the sea is sorry for the foolish little

children who make themselves unhappy with disagreements when they might be joyous; I think the sea is sorry because men and women are so often selfish, refusing to be like One who always went about doing good; I think every child could give some reason for the sorrow of the sea; but we must see what Xerxes did about his bridge.

He ordered his soldiers to throw some great chains into the sea to teach it that Xerxes could bind it; but the sea flung the chains deep into its own caves, and lifted its waves higher than ever. Then Xerxes ordered other soldiers to take great whips, and give this troublesome sea three hundred lashes, after which he made a speech to the ocean, which you must remember to find and read when you are old enough to read.

I think the sea could not help laughing at this speech; the saddest people sometimes laugh, and so I think whenever the ocean comes ashore at flood tide, it thinks of the silly speech, and laughs just enough to leave the beach dimpled and curved, as children's faces are dimpled and curved when laughter runs over them.

Xerxes thought the sea was his enemy; so he tried to fight it.

Since the Holy Child came into the world, men have been learning that the sea and the sun, the air and rocks, and the very lightnings themselves, are friendly to us, and will help us if we use them wisely, kindly, and in the love of Him who made them. So there has been a great cord wrapped around the sea, by the help of which men talk across the wide water as across a table.

Do you know the name of this wonderful cord which binds the nations of the earth together, so that love has chained the sea as Xerxes' pride and anger failed to do?

AUTUMN PRAYER.**I.**

Friend so gentle, kind, and dear,
Listen to Thy children here,
While they thank Thee for Thy love
Shown in stars that shine above ;
Shown in frost, in cloud o'erhead,
Shown in leaves of gold and red.

II.

Help me in my heart to thank Thee ;
Help me with my lips to praise Thee ;
May I to each playmate be
Kind, as Thou hast been to me.

STORY OF A MOUSE.

(ADAPTED FROM AN OLD TALE.)

A very neat little Mouse once lived in the same house with an ill-natured old Cat. When this little Mouse left his bed in the morning, he always washed and brushed himself with great care, taking particular pains with his long tail, which he kept very sleek and pretty.

One morning the untidy Cat had not been able to find her brush and comb, not having put them in their proper place the day before; and when the Mouse ran past her, she snapped his pretty tail quite off because she felt so cross. The little Mouse turned and said, "Please, Mrs. Cat, give me back my long tail!"

Mrs. Cat answered, "I will give you your long tail if you will bring me a saucer of milk; I always like milk better than tails."

The little Mouse had no milk in his pantry, but he took his tin pail, and went to the Cow, saying:

"Please, Mrs. Cow, give me some milk, and I will give Mrs. Cat some milk, and Mrs. Cat will give back my long tail."

The Cow said: "I will give you some milk, but I must first have some hay." The little Mouse then took his wheelbarrow, and going to the farmer, said:

"Please, Mr. Farmer, give me some hay, and I will give Mrs. Cow some hay; Mrs. Cow will give me some milk, and I will give Mrs. Cat some milk, and Mrs. Cat will give back my long tail."

The farmer said, "I would be glad to give you some hay, but my barn door is locked; if you will go to the locksmith, and get me a key, I will unlock my barn, and give you all the hay you can carry on your little wheelbarrow."

Then the little Mouse took his pocket book, and went to the locksmith, saying, "Please, Mr. Locksmith, give me a key, and I will give the farmer a key, and the farmer will give me some hay, and I will give Mrs. Cow some hay, and Mrs. Cow will give me some milk, and I will give Mrs. Cat some milk, and Mrs. Cat will then give me back my long tail."

The locksmith said, "I must have a file with which to make a key; if you will get

me a file, I will make the key with great pleasure."

So the little Mouse took his satchel, and went to the blacksmith, and asked him, saying:

"Please, Mr. Blacksmith, give me a file, and I will give Mr. Locksmith a file, and Mr. Locksmith will give me a key, and I will give the farmer a key, and the farmer will give me some hay, and I will give Mrs. Cow some hay, and Mrs. Cow will give me some milk, and I will give Mrs. Cat some milk, and Mrs. Cat will give me back my long tail."

The blacksmith answered, "I need some coal to build a fire before I can make a file. If you will go to the miner, and get me some coal, I will be glad to make a file for you."

So the Mouse took his little cart, and went down, down into the dark earth, until he saw a man with a lantern on his hat, and when he spoke to the man, the man said, "Well done, little Mousie, how did you get so far without a light?"

Mousie answered that he was quite used to playing in the dark, and now he must work night and day to get his tail again; and then he said:

"Please, Mr. Miner, give me some coal, and I will give the blacksmith some coal, the blacksmith will give me a file, I will give the locksmith a file, the locksmith will give me a key, I will give the farmer a key, and the farmer will give me some hay, and I will give Mrs. Cow some hay, and Mrs. Cow will give me some milk, and I will give Mrs. Cat some milk, and Mrs. Cat will give me back my long tail."

Then the miner filled the little cart with coal; and the Mouse trudged up to the blacksmith, who gave him the file, which he put in his little satchel, and then ran as fast as his feet would carry him to the locksmith, who gave him a key, which he put in his pocket book, and carried to the farmer, who unlocked the barn door, and gave him all the hay he could pile upon his wheelbarrow. Mousie took the hay to Mrs. Cow, who filled his little tin pail with milk, which the Mouse carried to the cat, saying, "Now, Mrs. Cat, please give me back my long tail."

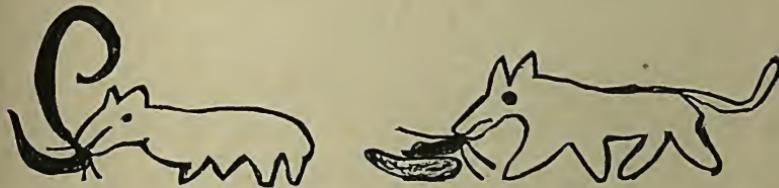
Mrs. Cat said: "So I will, my dear; but where have I put it?"

Then this untidy Cat called all the people in the house, saying: "Where could I have put that tail?"

"Oh! now I think I know—I believe it is in the upper bureau drawer." But the tail was not in the upper bureau drawer, and the poor Mousie who had worked so hard was nearly ready to cry, and the milk was getting cold. Then Mrs. Cat said: "I must have put it in this closet," and she ran to the closet, pulling down dresses and boxes; but there was no tail there, and the little Mouse had to wink very hard not to let the tears fall, and the milk was getting blue, when Mrs. Cat shouted: "Of course I put it in the second drawer;" but she tumbled all the things out of the drawer and found no tail; then the little Mouse had to sing "Yankee Doodle" to keep from crying, and the milk was in danger of getting sour.

Mrs. Cat now clapped her paws, and said: "Why, I know where it is,—I ought to have thought before. I put it here in this lower drawer, in this very box, wrapped up so neatly in pink tissue paper. Yes; hurrah! here it is!" And the Mousie took his pretty, long tail, and

ran home as fast as he could to get some glue to stick it on again; and Mrs. Cat ate her milk, thinking she would try hereafter to put things in their places.



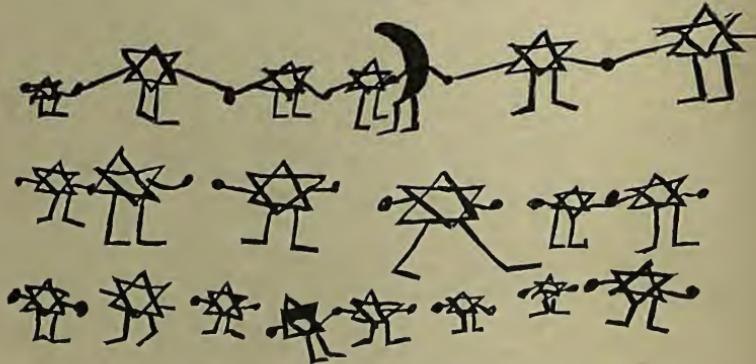
(A whole series of clay-modelling may be derived from this story, the children — even the youngest — finding it easy to model a mouse, two small beads being used for eyes; the older ones making the saucer, the pail, the wheelbarrow, etc.)

PEEP STAR! STAR PEEP!

One night the Stars said to the Moon, "Please may we stay out late to-night? We want to play hide and seek."

"You may stay as late as you please," said the Moon, "if you take good care of the baby Stars, and lead them so gently that none of them will fall."

So each Star took a baby Star by the hand, and led it out into the sky garden, where the game was to be played. That was a fine night



for a child to look up into the blue sky, for the Stars were all out: large Stars and small Stars, Stars that could run fast as a boy ten years old, and Stars that had to lie on little

cloud beds to watch the game, because they were too small to run without falling.

When the Stars play hide-and-seek, they do not cover their eyes with a bandage, for they can shut them so closely that even the Moon cannot be seen.

The oldest sister Star began the game by closing her eyes and counting ten, while the others held up their fingers for her to count, which, of course, no Star could do with her eyes shut.

When they were sure she could not see them, they kept their lips closed for fear a laugh would break out to tell where they were; and they ran on tiptoe until the sister Star spread out her arms and almost caught a dozen of them. Then they ran pell-mell under one of the little white cloud cribs, and a child who was looking at them, said,—

“I fink the Stars are playing peep-boo with me, mamma.”



One of the Stars heard the little girl, for the Stars are very glad to play with children, and are much pleased when children make pictures of them, and ask questions about them; and the Moon is always willing the Stars should be friendly with children, though it often happens that a careless Star leans so far over the sky-garden wall, to look at some baby of earth, that he falls down, down, to the ground. It does not hurt Stars to fall as it does children, and the Moon is not lonely when one of her Stars comes down here, for she can see and hear them wherever they are, and she knows better than your mamma does that one Father takes care of all children, so that to Him, none of them are ever lost; though the Star that falls to the earth does not shine any more, as it does when it is up in its own garden.

When you are older, you will learn about these meteors, and what relation they hold to stars.

When the little child said she thought the Stars were playing "peep-boo" with her, the sister Star said, "Come, a child wants to play with us." And those beautiful Stars took hold of hands, and ran down a wide path in such a

hurry, their white dresses and silver sashes fluttering about them, that to the little child looking at them they seemed like a snowy ribbon unrolled across the sky, and she cried out, "O mamma! I see a pretty white sash—and, mamma, mamma, it has little silver stars all broidered on it; do you think it is for some lady Star to wear to a party?"

Then the Stars laughed with glee, till the moon held up her fingers for them to listen to what a little boy, half-way across the world, was saying. He was talking to his papa; and when he saw all the Stars crowding down that bright path, he said,—

"Papa, I think those Stars are having a fine coasting party."

The little boy's papa and the little girl's mamma said,—

"I am glad the sky Father is the earth Father, too, and that the little Stars are just as well cared for as our children and ourselves."

When the Stars saw the sun coming to put them to bed, the Moon and all her family knelt down, just where they were, some in the garden path, and some on their cloud beds, and told the sky Father how glad they were that He could

take good care of Stars as well as of the dear little children in the under world.

And they went to sleep up there just as the children and birds were waking here.

GRANDMA KAOLINE.

(Illustrate with a little old woman made of clay.)

I have somebody under my handkerchief to introduce to you. It is a very little, very old lady. I will go around and introduce all the quiet, polite children to her. "Johnny Jones, this is Grandma Kaoline."

(Grandma Kaoline can be made to bow by bending the finger upon which she sits.)

You will see that Grandma Kaoline is made of clay. I am going to tell you a strange and wonderful story about Grandma Kaoline.

The clay of which she is made was found down in the ground, in what people call a clay bed, or clay bank; sometimes it is called a clay mine. Grandma Kaoline is so very, very old, that while we talk about the clay, we will let her take a nap under my handkerchief—perhaps she will like that as well as some longer

naps she has had in her other bed, underground.

Thousands of years ago, when the earth was very young—yes, millions of years ago, before little children came to live upon this beautiful earth, even before the earth had grown so beautiful, there was no clay here with which to make pretty things.

If Grandma Kaoline could take you by the hand, and lead you back to that time, the world would look so strange to you, that you would cry to come back to kindergarten. Grandma Kaoline could show you nothing but great rocks and oceans, with a few rivers of water. There were no birds, nor trees, nor flowers anywhere on the whole earth. The Careful Gardener had not made them yet, but He knew He should send some little children to live here some day, and there were many things to be made for them, one of which was this clay. Great rocks were thrown up into the air by earthquakes; they were tossed into the rivers by winds; they were pushed and knocked together until they became smooth as glass; then they were thrown into the air as if a giant were playing ball with

them, and their smooth sides broken until rough again.

They were rolled down mountains, and washed in rivers, until they were ground to powder, finer than flour.

This fine powder, ground from the granite rocks, was carried by the water into low places in the earth, and then it was laid to rest in cool, dark beds while something else was done by the Gardener who took care of everything.

I cannot tell you all that was done for us before we came; but you shall hear of more wonderful things than this at another time; now we are only to talk about the powdered stones which lay in the cool, dark, damp beds thousands of years, becoming clay at last, instead of stone.

(Show them a bit of granite.)

Do you think we could make this hard stone into soft clay?

Was it not kind of the Gardener to do for us what we could not do ourselves?

GRANDMA KAOLINE'S STORY.

I have told you a story about Grandma Kaoline, and now Grandma Kaoline may tell you a story about herself. We will play that Grandma Kaoline can talk, and you may listen to her. I think these little children will learn to listen to the stories that the flowers and rocks, the grass and shells, have to tell.

(If the teacher thinks best, she can imitate the voice of an old woman.)

"Once I lay in a bed which was larger than your crib, larger than your mother's bed, larger than this house; yes, larger than the whole city of Boston.

"My bed was down under the water, and I wondered what would ever be done with it. I wondered a great many years, and all the time I was wondering, the bed was growing larger; until one day it was pushed up out of the water, and lay in the sweet sunshine—to air, I supposed.

"It was lying there, so soft and cool and smooth, when some strange looking people came along. They were not riding in car-

riages; for they had not yet learned to make carriages. They were not riding on horses; for they had not yet learned to tame the horses, which were wilder than any untamed horse you ever saw. They were all walking. Their feet were bare; for they had not yet learned to make shoes for themselves. They wore but few clothes, and what they did wear were made of the skins of animals; for they had not yet learned to make cloth.

"They were thirsty, but they had no dishes from which to drink; for they had not yet learned to make dishes. So they dipped their hands in the pools, and drank from the little cup which we can all make in the palms of our hands.

"A very pretty woman with a very pretty baby made a cup for the baby from a large leaf. While she was getting the leaf, she left the baby standing on the cool bed of clay; and when she came back to take him up, there were the prints of his two pretty feet, with each little toe as perfect as could be. The woman looked at the little cups made by the pretty baby feet; then she kissed the dimpled feet, tossed the baby over her shoul-

der, and went with the other people, who wandered around the country, not knowing how to do much of anything, but learning a little every day.

"After a long time these same people came back to the same place where the baby had stood in the clay bed, and what do you suppose the baby's mother saw? The two little cups made by baby feet had become quite firm and hard in the sunshine; and baby's father and mother both shouted, 'Look! look! Why can we not make dishes from this stuff?' The people ran like children, filled their hands with the soft clay, and made deep dishes, like vases, in which they could keep their seeds and grain; for they soon learned that water would make their new dishes crumble in pieces. After a long, long time somebody threw an old vase into the fire—the fires, you must know, were built upon the ground; for the people had not yet learned to make stoves, nor had they learned how to make matches. It was therefore so hard to kindle a fire, when it went out, that they took great pains to keep one burning as long as they stayed in a place; and it was in one of these fires which burned many

days that the old vase was thrown. You will see that the vase must have been well baked before the people went away to learn something else in their wanderings; but, not knowing that a baked vase was any better than an unbaked one, they left it in the ashes.

"After a very long time they came again to this place, having learned how to take better care of their babies, and to make better things for their own dinners. Somebody picked up the vase from the ashes, and found that it was very hard and smooth. They poured some water in it, and the water did not make it crumble; then they knew they could make dishes by baking the clay in a very hot fire, and they danced and shouted for joy that dishes could be made to hold milk and water.

"They built great fires, and made more dishes than they could use; they amused themselves by making pictures on the unbaked dishes, with sharp sticks. These pictures would remain, of course: sometimes we find one of those old dishes now. After many hundred years they learned to make China cups and saucers. They learned many other useful things; so that now we, who are their

great-great-great-great-grandchildren, live in good houses, have good clothes and good food, and are still learning how to use the things which the Careful Gardener has placed here for us."

(An impression strongly resembling a baby's foot can be made in the clay by doubling the hand and pressing the inside of the fist into the clay, the toes being added by indenting with the fingers. Showing these cups to the children increases their interest in the subject; and firing some of their best work, which can be done at trifling expense, will give them a living interest in, and knowledge of pottery.)

THE WALNUT TREE THAT BORE TULIPS.

The Tulips carved from the heart of the patient Walnut tree adorned the temple for which they were fashioned more years than the Tree had struggled with the storms of its old life.

The carved petals grew darker with age, and the Walnut's heart of hearts became more peaceful with "self-devotion and with self-restraint."

One Easter day, the altar was adorned with living Tulips whose hearts were aflame with

life and love; the cup of a splendid black Tulip was lifted to touch the dark wood of the carved altar, and the heart of the old Walnut throbbed with a divine discontent which was so softened by divine patience that it hardly knew it sang:

“Father, I’m waiting yet,
Hoping thou’lt not forget.
Others I strive to bless,
Asking no happiness
But what thou wilt.
Carven and still I stand,
My life in thy dear hand.”

Thus it poured out its melody while the people worshipped, and when a misplaced candle set fire to the altar draperies, and the great cathedral shrivelled and crackled in the flames, the Walnut yielded its Tulips to the elements without fear, almost without hope, but with an infinite satisfaction in having given itself bravely and uncomplainingly to the Father’s great plans, which must include a higher happiness for somebody than the heart of a Walnut could devise or perhaps even hold.

The ashes of the Walnut tree lay white and ghastly upon the charred earth; the dew gathered upon them, and the rain beat them deeper and deeper into the pitiless dust. At first they lay in the form of the Tulips, but the wind soon whirled the pale petal-shaped mass into pathetic shapelessness, and there lay the heart of the Walnut, forgotten of all but the unforgetting Father.

They yielded themselves now to winter's frost and summer's heat with no will but to suffer, and no hope but to bless unknown lives in His way, though only by enriching the earth for other blossoms.

A gardener passed that way, and like the woodman of old, selected that which best served his purpose — the self-prepared earth. A Tulip bulb was buried in this fruitful soil, and by the beautiful chemistry of nature, the Walnut tree found its carved, burned, and storm-beaten heart transformed into the living beauty of a magnificent black Tulip.

Is not this enough? — a hundred years of growth; a struggle with storms; a final fall beneath the woodman's axe; the sharp instruments of the wood carver; the adorning of

the temple; after which the flame and the frost; the loss of identity except to the Father; burial and final resurrection for one week of bloom in the color and form of a Tulip?

Nay; it is not enough, and the bright Tulip lifts its chalice, heart of Tulip answering to heart of child:

“There is no death; there is only change. Live for others while you keep your own good purpose unchanged as the unchanging Father’s love; forget selfish aims, yielding your life to wiser plans than any you can imagine—and like the Walnut tree, you will find at length a joy too deep for any language but that of blooming in sweet and sacred silence.”

STORY OF BERNARD PALISSY.

The people had used vases and urns, ornamented with pictures scratched in the soft clay, a great many years before they learned to make cups with the beautiful shining enamel which you now see every day; and although men in Egypt and Italy had made

dishes with pictures in all colors upon them, no one in France knew how to do it until about four hundred years ago, when Bernard Palissy saw a china cup with a shining surface upon which were painted flowers that could not be rubbed off. He had learned of his father to paint glass, and he was a patient man who loved dearly to do hard tasks; had he been in a kindergarten when a little boy, he would never have given up trying to weave a mat until he could do it as well as anybody.

You shall hear how long and patiently he tried to learn to enamel china.

First of all he had to go to a potter and learn how to make clay cups from the beginning. He said to himself, "I will make as pretty cups in France as have been made in Italy." So he made some as smooth as glass and brushed them with something which he thought would shine, and painted pretty designs upon them and put them in the great ovens. They came out rough and spoiled by the heat. Bernard Palissy did not cry, nor ask somebody to help him, but he used another kind of paste and paint; the green color turned brown in the heat, and the pink roses came out of the

oven looking like withered leaves, and he said, "At least I have learned how to produce brown colors; I shall yet learn what to put on my cups that will turn pink and blue in the heat."

He tried one year, two years, three years, four years, five years, but his dishes were not yet smooth, nor his colors correct.

Bernard Palissy had spent nearly all the money he had saved while painting glass for his father, but he was not discouraged.

He made more dishes, and tried another way which was nearer right than anything he had yet done; so he was pleased and worked another year and another, until ten years had passed, and his money was all gone.

He sold his watch and his Sunday clothes to get money to buy new paints and glazing material. At last he had only rags to wear, and crusts of bread to eat, and alas! he had no more wood or coal with which to fire his china. And he thought he had found the right colors and combinations. What could he do?

He said: "I can sleep on the floor, and I have no time to sit in chairs; as for my table, I have so little food to put on it that I can

get along without that too, and I need nothing in the world so much as one large fire for this china." So he put all his furniture that was made of wood into the furnace. He had been trying sixteen years now, and he could hardly sleep for fear of another failure, but when he drew the dainty dishes out of the ovens — hurrah! hurrah! they were perfect! He sent a beautiful plate to Queen Catherine de Medicis with a message that it was made in France by a Frenchman who wished to present it to her. She was so much pleased that she gave Bernard Palissy money for other dishes, and he was able after that to work at the beautiful art without any more fear of hunger or cold, and at last he was invited to Paris to the palace of the king, where people loved and honored him because he had had the courage to try sixteen years to do a bit of hard work.

WINTER PRAYER**I.**

Loving Friend, oh, hear our prayer :
Take into Thy tender care
All the leaves and flowers that sleep
In their white beds, covered deep ;
Shelter from the wintry storm
All Thy snow-birds ; keep them warm.

II.

Help me in my heart to thank Thee ;
Help me with my lips to praise Thee ;
May I to each playmate be
Kind, as Thou hast been to me.

TWO PICTURES.

In a far away land there is a great city; in that great city there is a long street; in that long street there is a large house; in that large house there is a pretty room; in that pretty room there is a small crib; in that small crib there is a snow white blanket; in that snow white blanket there is a sweet, new—BABY.

AND

In a far away country there is a great forest; in the midst of the great forest there is a tall tree; on that tall tree there are swinging branches; in those swinging

branches there is a little nest; in the little nest there is a white egg; in the white egg a young bird is saying “pip-pip,” and the mother bird knows that is a call for help, and she is ready to take the young bird from the shell, and sing it a song of joy and gladness.

A LEGEND OF THE GREAT DIPPER.

The faces of the Stars shone so brightly one night, that the earth children thought the Mamma Moon was telling a pretty story. And so she was; and this is the story:

The Great Dipper, which you, my dear children, so love to form, has a deep meaning, which you are not to forget as long as the Stars shine. I tell you the story as often as you ask it, and your asking makes me quite as happy as my telling can make you.

See the dear baby Stars running to make a small dipper, like their older sisters! said the Lady Moon softly to the great Mars, who bent over her chair as she spoke.



In another world than ours, continued the Lady Moon, there was once a great trouble and sorrow. No; it was not in the earth world, my dear, she said to a tiny Star who always asked questions; it was not in the Heaven world either, but in another far away

world, where many children lived. For some good reason, which only the Father knows, the people and children, the animals, and every living thing, were suffering great thirst ; no water, nor dew, nor drop of moisture, could they find anywhere.

It was very horrible, and the people were very near death.

A little child of that world went out alone in the dry, dark night, carrying a small tin dipper, and prayed very earnestly for just that little cup of water ; and when she lifted the cup, it was brimming with clear, cold water, which would not spill, though she ran rapidly, her hand trembling with her faintness ; for she did not taste the water, having prayed for another's need. As she ran, she stumbled and fell, for she was very weak ; and when feeling about, trying to rise, she touched a little dog that seemed to be dying of its thirst, and the good child poured a few drops of the precious water in the palm of her hand, and let the dog lap it. He seemed as much refreshed as if he had drank from a river.

The child could not see what happened to her cup ; but we saw, and sang for joy. The

cup turned to silver, and grew larger, the water not having become less, but more, by her giving.

She hurried on to give the water to one who was quite unable to come to meet her,—none other than her own dear mamma, who took the water eagerly, as one in a deadly fever of thirst, but without putting it to her lips; for she heard just then a weak moan, which came from her faithful servant, who tried to raise her mistress's head, but found she had not the strength. The mother pressed the dipper into the hands of the maid, and bade her drink, feeling her own life so wasted that one little cup of water could not renew it. And neither maid servant nor mistress noticed that the dipper changed from silver to gold, and grew larger than before. The good servant was about to give each member of the family one spoonful of the precious water, when a Stranger entered, dressed in a costume unknown in that country, and speaking in a strange tongue, but showing the same signs of thirst and distress as themselves. The maid servant said, "Sacred are the needs of the Stranger in a strange land," and pressed the

dipper to the parched lips of the fainting man.

Then the great wonder was wrought! and the golden dipper flashed forth incrusted with the most precious diamonds, containing a fountain of gushing water, which supplied the thirsting nation as freely and surely as it had quenched the thirst of the little dog.

And the Stranger stood before them a glorious, radiant Being; and as he faded from their sight, a silver trumpet tone was heard to proclaim:

“Blessed is he that giveth a cup of water in My name.”

And the possession of a dipper blazing with diamonds is, in that country, a sure badge of royalty; for no one can buy or receive one as a gift, nor can fathers bequeath them to children.

Each child is given a tin dipper at its birth, and only by purely unselfish acts can the diamond one be wrought.

Some of the foolish people have not yet learned its secret, and they go about trying to exchange their tin for silver, by doing kind things. Sometimes they accuse the Father of

All very bitterly, because they grow old possessing only the tin dipper; for the secret of the exchange can no more be told than the beautiful, flashing, sparkling diamonds can be purchased.

Sometimes there are great surprises, when people give up the hope of such a possession, and forget themselves; for then they often find the cast away tin bearing evidence in silver, gold, or even diamonds, that they have become royal; but by that time they have no vanity because of their fortune. Only modest, thankful, brave, happy feelings possess the owners of diamond dippers.

The Lady Moon now lifted a white finger toward the east, which was growing rosy, and the baby Stars all knelt a moment, looking like white robed nuns at prayers.

Then the morning wind swept aside the great blue silken curtain of the sky, and the Mamma Moon followed her children into Heaven, to do or play whatever the Father had planned for them while they were out shining for His earth children.

THE LITTLE BOY IN OUR HOUSE.

There is a little boy in our house.

There is a coat, for the little boy in our house.

There is a tailor who makes the coat, for the little boy in our house.

There is a weaver who weaves the cloth, from which the tailor makes the coat, for the little boy in our house.

There is a spinner who spins the thread, from which the weaver weaves the cloth, from which the tailor cuts the coat, for the little boy in our house.

There is a sheep that gives the

wool, from which the spinner spins the thread, from which the weaver weaves the cloth, from which the tailor makes the coat, for the little boy in our house.



IDDLY BUNG'S APRIL CHRISTMAS TREE.

Of course his real name was not Iddly Bung; but that was what he called himself when he tried to say "Little Ben," in answer to the oft repeated question, "What is your name, little man?" For no one passed the house in the outskirts of a Georgian city without noticing the great eyed, small bodied child who carried bundles of sticks, or buckets of water—the latter making him look like some strange animal with one broad ear standing upright; for the bucket was not a bucket, neither was it a pail, but a piggin which he carried on his head. If you were to tell Ben that a piggin, according to Webster, is a wooden dipper, Ben would laugh at you, and ask if folks didn't

milk into piggins. If you said they did, he would say, "Well, folks don't milk into dippers, do they?" If you did not agree that therefore a piggin is no dipper, Ben would go about his work thinking what must be done to-morrow before "sun up,"—that being what he called sunrise,—refusing to discuss a question that seemed to him to have but one side.

Ben was a poor boy who tried to do all he could for his mother, who went out to sew. As he was alone most of the time, he did not learn to talk plainly, as boys do who play much with other children.

In the morning he would creep quietly out of bed, look lovingly at his mother, wishing it would not waken her to "love" her just a little. Ben had never learned that there was any love but that expressed by hugging, patting, and kissing. So he would deny himself until the fire was made, and the kettle placed over it, when he would kiss his mother's eyes open; for she had let him think that they could not open until his lips unlocked them. Sometimes he would open one of them with kisses, and playfully threaten to keep the

other shut all day; and there would be great glee when the eyelid was unsealed with the precious kiss.

One April day, after the trees were quite green with leaves, the mountain brooks fringed with the sweet wild jessamine, and even the laurel had hung out its waxen sprays of pink and white blossoms to tell us it was too late to look for arbutus, Captain Jennings started on horseback to look at the mountain streams, and learn if it were true that there was danger of a flood.

Sometimes the lovely valley land in Georgia is overflowed very suddenly; for the snow high up in the mountains melts, and rushes down to the rivers faster than the rivers can run to the ocean. Then there is what they call a "back-water"; that is, the water is crowded back, and spreads through the valley, covering houses and sometimes drowning people. Captain Jennings was alone; and, as he galloped out into the open country, he saw a little boy riding a stick the same way in which he was going. The child looked so much like his little sister of thirty years ago that he stopped, and asked him how he would like to trade horses. The

boy was Ben; and, looking wishfully at the gay horse and handsome rider, thinking that he had never been on a real horse, and remembering what his mother had told him about the Good Friend who never made fun of people, he said boldly, with tears flashing in his great eyes, "I fought you was Dod; but he wouldn't make fun of me and my sossy" (horse). Captain Jennings felt sad, for he did not mean to make fun of Ben; and, thinking of the little sister, whose eyes used so easily to fill with tears, he said kindly: "I did not mean to make fun of you, my boy. Will you ride with me on this horse?" "When will you bing me bat?" "Before sundown; jump up, little one." And Ben was on a live, prancing horse instead of a stick.

They rode through thickets of oak, and Ben stripped the leaves as they flew past, and flung them to the wind, which seemed to him to meet them everywhere, just to catch his leaves and toss his hair. They scared up partridges, that whirred about with much ado, and sat down again while Ben was still in sight. What wonderland was this to little Ben, who had never before been three miles from home!

At last Ben saw something which made him cry softly, "Please stop; there is Dod's own, own Trismas tree!" Captain Jennings stopped his horse, and looked; there stood a tree, forty feet high, with long leaves with fretted edges that looked like emerald jewels, and tapers that held within them such soft, mellow light as never waxen tapers dreamed of shedding. Captain Jennings took off his hat, while Ben asked if they could not wait for the angels who lighted the candles to come back. You do not believe they saw any such thing? If you never saw a horse-chestnut tree in bloom, you may well think this an untrue story; but if you have seen one, you will not wonder that little Ben thought it "Dod's own, own Trismas tree." Ben asked Captain Jennings if he thought the angels would care if he took a branch with just two candles to his mother.

What a happy boy was he, when he had the branch in his hand! He hugged it to his breast, and kissed the candle, which he was sure the angels had but just touched.

Captain Jennings had made up his mind that there was great danger of a flood, and he galloped home so fast that Ben could not

catch a leaf of the trees that brushed his face as they hurried onward. They were soon at Ben's door, and Captain Jennings dropped Ben quickly to the ground, and spurred his horse to a gallop,—thinking, as he did so, that this house of Ben's stood on low ground, but soon forgetting it in anxious work for the safety of the town.

After working until late in the evening, Captain Jennings went to bed, leaving a boat chained to his window, and was soon asleep. Later in the night he was wakened by the steady, heavy patter, patter, patter, of rain upon his windows. He rose and looked out; there was darkness, and cloud, and chilling rain above; and below, the black water was creeping softly and darkly all around his house.

There was no light where the stars sometimes shine, but far out on the water he saw red lights from scores of little boats that were gliding here and there, taking people to the hills, from houses that were fast filling with water.

Captain Jennings had been making boats, and had laughed at the grim humor of a man with brush and paint who had marked some

boats "The Ark," and others, "The Gondola," and others, "Venice." But now that the water was about him, and the darkness covering the water, he wondered how he could have laughed when the sun was shining.

Captain Jennings did not want to go into all that cold and dark which was outside his door. He had moved upstairs, so he did not mind if the first floor of his house was filled with water. Why should he not go to bed and to sleep? It is not pleasant to row in a heavy rain, to dodge floating houses, and hear the cries of frightened children: so he would go to bed. But as his head sank into the warm pillow, he thought of little Ben and "Dod's own, own Trismas tree"; of the low ground on which Ben's house stood; the loneliness of the place; the feelings which people must have who have no boat at such a time; of the lost sister of whom Ben had made him think all day; of that dark water, crawling with its soft splash, higher, higher, higher, until—what if Ben and his "Trismas tree" were left entirely to the angels! Who knows but the angels were thus calling to Captain Jennings to help them?

Be that as it may, Captain Jennings was out in his boat by the time he had thought all this, and was rowing swiftly toward the little house, thinking of little Ben, the little "Trismas tree," and the far away little sister, who must be a woman now.

As he came near the house, he heard a glad cry from Ben, who had seen the lantern coming that way. Ben and his mother were out on the house roof, the water having nearly reached the eaves. But Ben, with the faith of a child and the courage of a man, was assuring his mother that help would come before they floated away. For "of tourse Dod watched His Trismas tree," and must see Ben, who had a branch of it in his wee hand, really thinking more of the angels who lighted the candles than of any present danger.

Of course they were taken from the roof to the boat, and carried to a place of safety.

Ben thinks "Dod's Trismas tree" saved their lives. Ben's mother thinks that it would have been from no forgetfulness or unkindness of their Heavenly Father if their lives had been lost. And Captain Jennings would like to know just how much the angels had to do

with that flood and the April Christmas tree and the finding of his darling sister, whom Ben's mother proved to be.

A STORY FOR WILLIE WINKLE.

One winter night old North Wind and little Jack Frost had a talk, which I happened to overhear.

North Wind called Jack Frost to see a snow-drift which he had blown into a fence corner, and, with his gray wing, swept into curves as pretty as one ever sees anywhere except in a little child's face.

Jack Frost looked and laughed, saying: "I can make things quite as pretty; but I must work in the water."

North Wind wrapped his cloak of clouds about him, and went to see Jack Frost work in a stream of water not far away.

As they flew, with clouds and snow before them, Jack Frost peeped in a window, and saw a little boy sleeping.

"Let's do something for Willie Winkle," whispered Jack Frost.

"Agreed!" shouted North Wind. To work they went,—North Wind puffing little starry gems of snow against the window pane outside, while Jack Frost fastened them on, and, at the same time, drew pictures of trees and vines on the inside, which were so pretty that North Wind fairly shook the house, trying to get in to see them. Jack Frost, fearing all the noise of North Wind would waken Willie Winkle, hurriedly tasted the water in Willie's silver cup, which turned the water to ice, and crept out at the keyhole.

When North Wind and Jack Frost reached the brooklet, they were talking about the children they had seen that night; and the little brook stopped to listen, for she had missed the visits from the children for many a day. And, as she listened, every drop, ripple, and dimple of the brooklet turned into crystal, and stood still there, waiting until spring for the children.

When North Wind and Jack Frost passed a tiny pond, old North Wind fairly held his breath a moment with delight; then he, being the older, said, "Let's work together this winter."

"Agreed!" laughed Jack Frost, from the tur-

ret of an ice palace which he was finishing.
“Will you ripple the top of this water, while I freeze it?”

“That I will,” answered old North Wind.
“It will spoil the skating for the big boys;
but we’ll work for the little folks to-night.”

So North Wind blew across the water till it curled and wrinkled and waved like a broad field of wheat under the wing of South Wind in summer. Jack Frost, following close upon the breath of North Wind, kissed the ripples and wrinkles, and there they stood. The waters were all curled and frozen over little caves, shining grottoes, and glittering palaces of ice.

As North Wind and Jack Frost were going home next morning, they saw Willie Winkle looking at the pretty pictures on his window.

“Let us speak to him,” said North Wind. But at his voice the window rattled and shook so noisily that Willie Winkle ran away to sit by the warm fire.

After breakfast Willie Winkle went again to the window; and, seeing the beautiful drifts and wreaths and banks and puffs of snow in corners, on gate posts, and in tree tops, he begged to go outside. He was no sooner in

the yard, than Jack Frost came creeping, and North Wind came shouting; and one pinched his ears, the other blew off his hat. And such a wrestling match as Willie Winkle had with them made even his mamma laugh.

When he went in the house, his cheeks were as red as roses, and his fingers as purple as Jack Frost could make them with his kisses and pinches.

